

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 084341
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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 084341

FOL RPT TOKYO 5273 SENT ACTION SECSTATE INFO SEOUL R 120858Z
APR 77 QUOTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L TOKYO 5273

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MARR, JA
SUBJECT: AIR SUPPORT FOR KOREA

1. FONOFF SECURITY DIVISION CHIEF SATO TOLD EMBOFF APRIL 12
THAT QUESTIONS WERE EXPECTED AS RESULT OF AMBASSADOR-DESIGNATE
MANSFIELD'S TIME INTERVIEW IN WHICH HE SAID HE FAVORED PULLING
US TROOPS OUT OF KOREAN AND THAT THEY COULD BE "COMPENSATED FOR
BY AN AERIAL UMBRELLA BASED IN JAPAN THAT COULD COME TO THE AID
OF KOREA." SATO SAID THAT SOME MAY INFER FROM QUOTE THAT US
INTENDED TO MAKE UP ANY IMBALANCE WHICH MIGHT OCCUR AS RESULT OF
WITHDRAWALS SOLELY WITH AIR POWER BASED IN JAPAN. STORY MIGHT
ALSO ENCOURAGE ARGUMENT THAT US WITHDRAWALS WOULD BE PREMISED
ON "FREE USE" OF BASES IN JAPAN.

2. SATO SAID THAT FONOFF GUIDANCE FOR RESPONDING TO QUESTIONS
ON STORY INCLUDED FOLLOWING POINTS: (A) US NOW CONTEMPLATING
ONLY WITHDRAWAL OF GROUND FORCES, (B) IN EVENT OF EMERGENCY, US
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WOULD HAVE TO DECIDE ON HOW TO PROVIDE AIR SUPPORT AND THIS
MIGHT INCLUDE USE OF AIR UNITS BASED IN JAPAN, (C) USE OF BASES
IN JAPAN FOR MILITARY COMBAT OPERATIONS WOULD BE SUBJECT TO PRIOR
CONSULTATIONS AND GOJ RESPONSE WOULD BE BASED ON DETERMINATION
OF NATIONAL INTEREST ON CASE BY CASE BASIS.

3. SATO ALSO SAID THAT SOME JAPANESE ATTACHED SPECIAL

SIGNIFICANCE TO PRESIDENT'S USE OF WORDS "AIR COVER" IN DESCRIB-
ING US INTENT TO PROVIDE AIR SUPPORT, E.G., IN MARCH 9 PRESS
CONFERENCE. THEY READ WORDS AS HINT THAT US MIGHT WITHDRAW AIR
FORCES AND PROVIDE AIR SUPPORT FROM OUTSIDE KOREA. FONOFF DRAFT
GUIDANCE ON THIS POINT EXPRESSES GOJ UNDERSTANDING THAT US
INTENDS TO PROVIDE SUPPORT PRIMARILY FROM UNITS OPERATING FROM
KOREA BUT THAT AIR SUPPORT COULD ALSO COME FROM ELSEWHERE SUCH
AS SEVENTH FLEET AND JAPAN.

4. EMBOFF NOTED THAT ADMINISTRATION HAS MADE QUITE CLEAR ITS
WITHDRAWAL PLANS ARE RESTRICTED TO GROUND UNITS AND CAUTIONED
AGAINST EXCESSIVE SEMANTIC ANALYSIS.
SHOESMITH

UNQUOTE VANCE

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NNN

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